

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 6, with the following amended paragraph:

Cell supernatants were screened by direct ELISA. ELISA plates were coated with *B. anthracis* spore and vegetative preparation antigens as positive antigen, and bovine serum albumin (BSA) as negative antigen, diluted to an optimized concentration in PBS. Plates were incubated 18-24 hours at 4°C. Plates were washed four times with PBS. Cell supernatants were added to both positive and negative coated antigen wells, undiluted. Mouse sera from the immunized mice was added to plate at a dilution of 1:200, and serially diluted to an endpoint. This was included as a positive control. Plates were incubated at 37°C for one hour. Plates were washed four times with PBS. Horseradish peroxidase (HRP) conjugated goat anti mouse IgG+M+A (KPL) was added to all wells, and incubated at 37°C for one hour. Plates were washed four times with PBS. Substrate was added to plates and incubated at 37°C for 30 minutes. Plates were read for optical density at 280 nm, and evaluated for positive results. Cells producing the highest optical density readings, i.e., above 1.000 OD, were subcloned. After each subcloning, cell supernatants were screened for positive antibody. Finalized clones were tested for isotype using monoclonal antibody-based mouse Ig isotyping kit (catalog # 04017K; BD PharMingen). Three monoclonal antibodies (termed AX-EA1-G1, 8G4, and 9F5) were selected for their ability to uniquely detect *B. anthracis* and not cross-react with other closely related *Bacillus* species. Monoclonal antibody AX-EA1-G1 was deposited with the ATCC (10801 University Blvd., Manassas, Virginia, 20110-2209) and accorded accession number PTA-2632, on Oct. 26, 2000. The selection of these monoclonal antibodies was based on their strong reactivity against *B. anthracis* antigens and their negative reactivity against the closely related strains of *B. thuringiensis* (ATCC 33680, HD571, A1 Hakam, and commercial insecticide preparation from Dipel Dust), *B. globigii* and *B. licheniformis* (ATCC 25972) (Table 2, 3 and 4). In addition, these monoclonal antibodies were negative when tested against a selected number of other bacteria (*Francisella tularensis* and *Yersinia pestis*), purified proteins (ovalbumin and S.

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aureus enterotoxin B), and environmental components (red clay, gravel, and mulch) (Table 2, 3 and 4).